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"THE WHIPPER MAN"

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Study Of Migrant And Indian Education

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The dialogue and art work of the Whipper Man was developed by Larry George, a Yakima Indian working as an aide for a local school district.

The Whipper Man was a highly respected person. Respect was shown him by the elders and the young. However, this respect had to be earned. He was chosen (appointed) by tribal leaders and relatives based on the development of character beyond reproach.

The Whipper Man functioned in the role of a disciplinarian. He disciplined youngsters if they were disrespectful to the leaders. This discipline was administered in a very positive sense and was understood by young and old.

Generally the Whipper Man was seen to function in two settings. One, A Whipper Man was selected by the elders of the tribe when feasts or other gatherings of the people as a whole were held. Two, in a family situation where it could be the selection of an uncle or other relative. The Whipper Man was paid with blankets, food or other appropriate gifts.

It is our desire that young and old enjoy the Whipper Man as much as I do.

Sincerely,

Lloyd M. Gabriel

Lloyd M. Gabriel, Ed. D.
Director

April 1971

The Center for the Study of Migrant and Indian Education; a project of Central Washington State College is reproducing this collection of material developed by the Granger School District, No. 204, Granger, Washington upon their request that it would be made available to educators for classroom use.

The many requests the Center has had with respect to relevant materials pertaining to the Indians of the Northwest, with particular emphasis on the Indians of Washington State, has prompted the cooperative efforts of the Granger School District and the Center to produce and disseminate this material.

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Lloyd M. Gabriel, Ed. D.
Director

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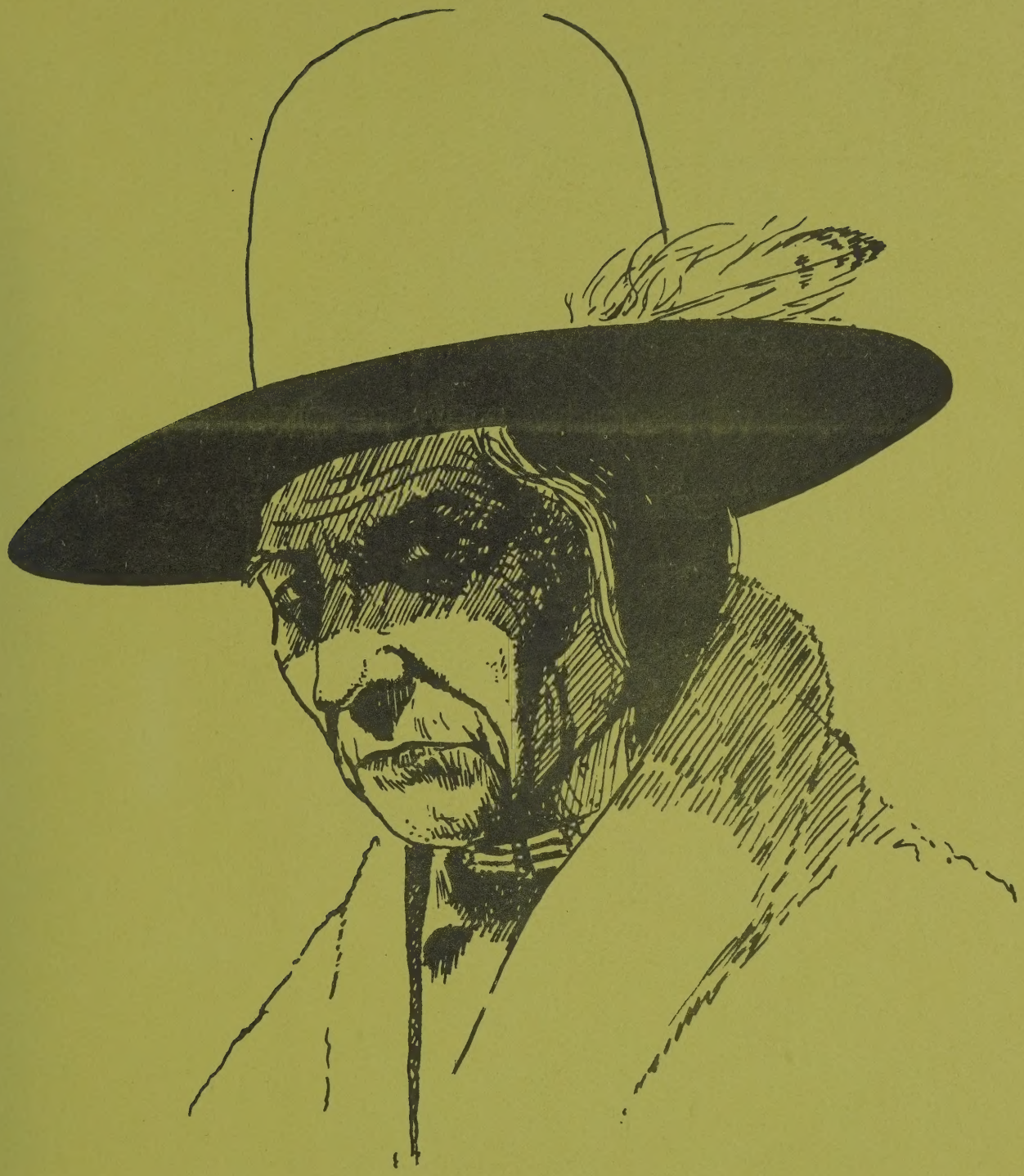
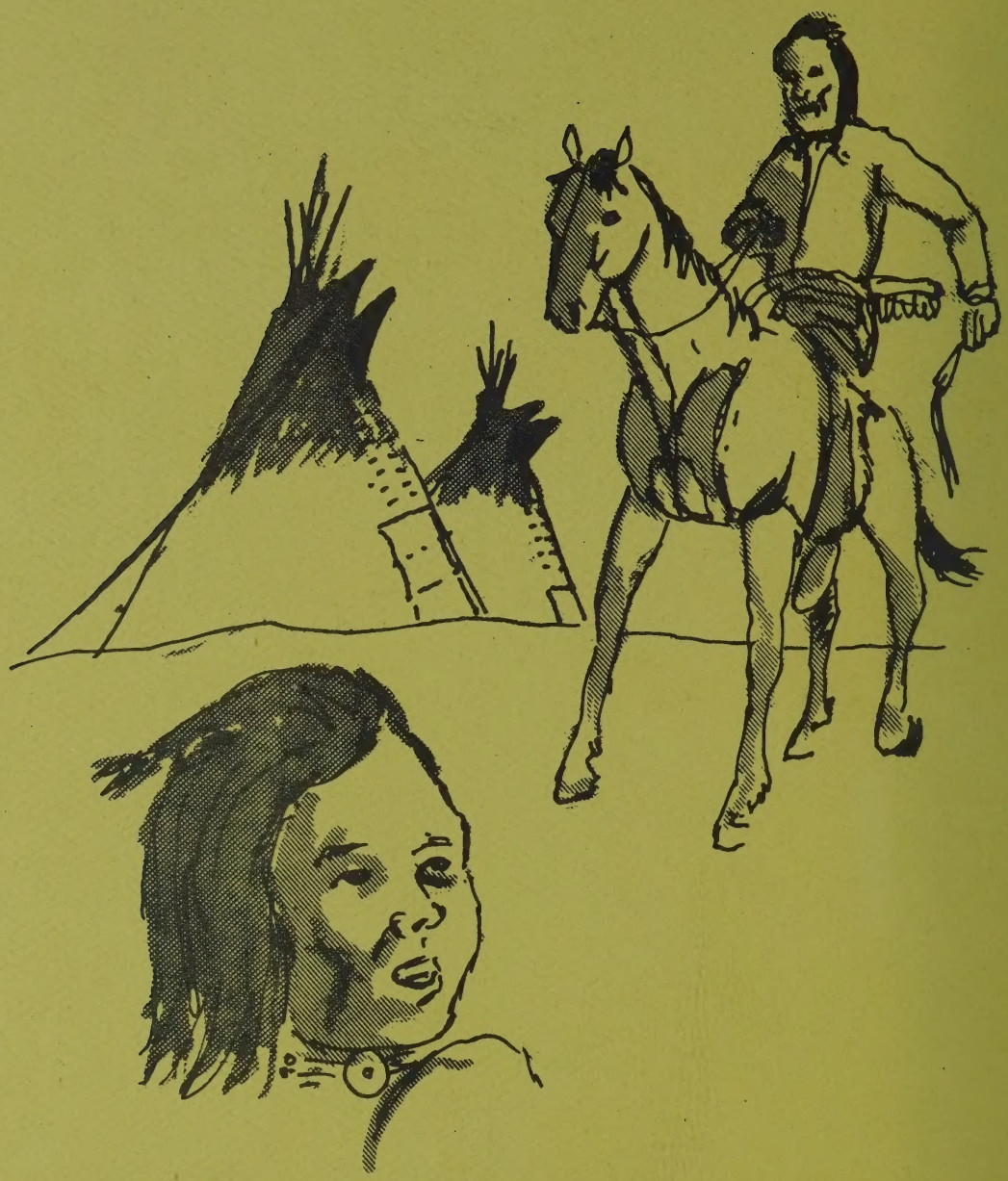


There was a time, long years since passed, when young Indian children were whipped by the "Whip Man." We young people called him the "Whipper Man."

It might be a nice spring day, everything smelling nice and fresh. We would be playing, it could be any game, hide-an-seek, or just throwing or skipping rocks over the water. From our place we could see maybe five miles up the dirt road.

"Hey, look! Dust! Someone is coming!" We were always happy to see people come because of the remoteness of our home.

As the car neared we could see the color, and we knew.... "Oh, no! It's the Whipper Man!"

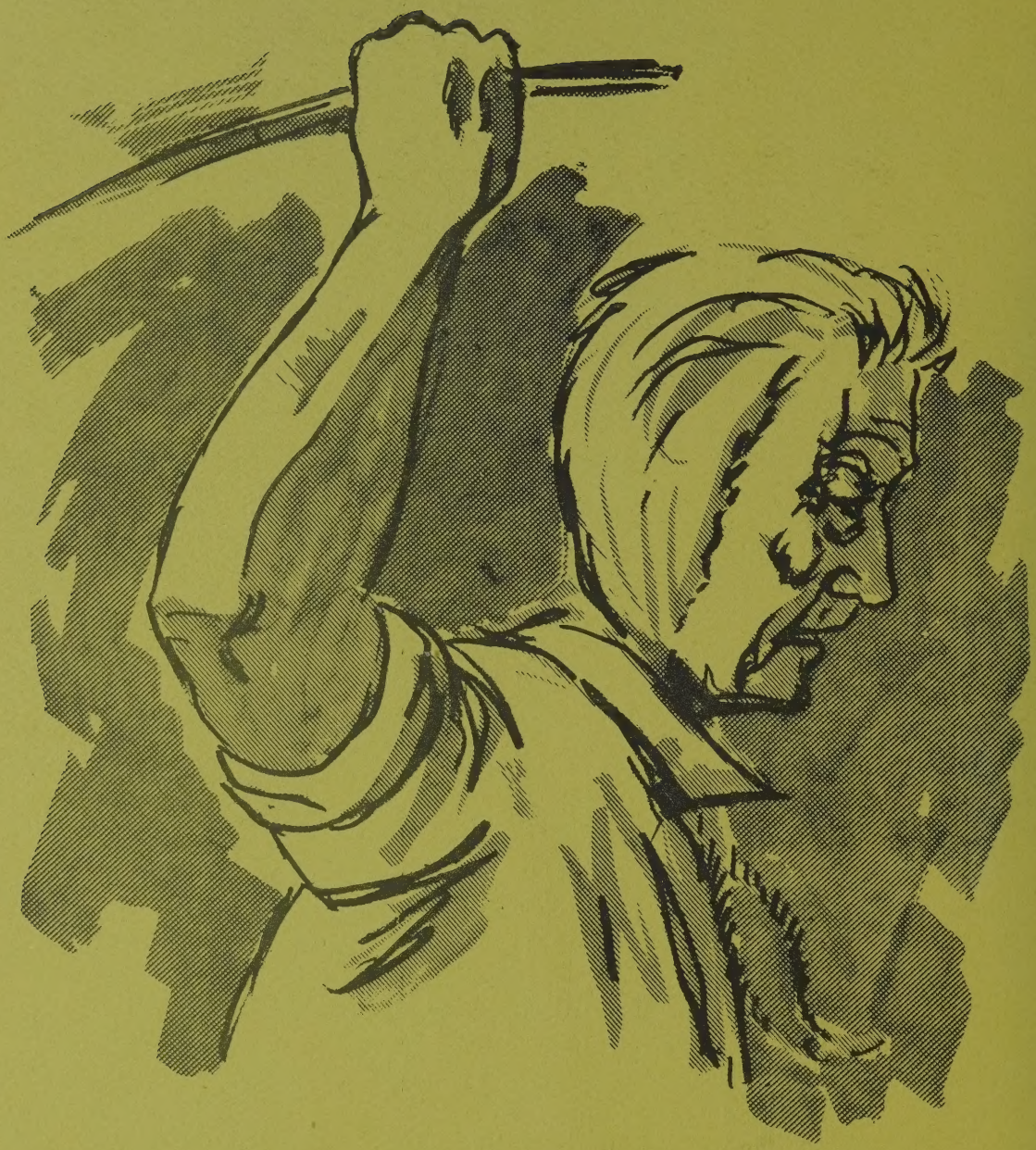


On a similar day, fifty to two hundred years back, children may have said the same thing...

"Oh, no! It's the 'Whipper Man'." It wasn't just a spring day, it was any day that he might come.

Parents of Indian children never had to whip their young ones for any wrong doing...

"The Whip Man will come! You know this! He'll come, and we all know what it is that you have done wrong."



This was true. When the Whip Man did come, he would gather up all the children and whip them with five willows tied together.

We would all line up and wait our turns.

"Now you know why I'm whipping you, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Why?!"

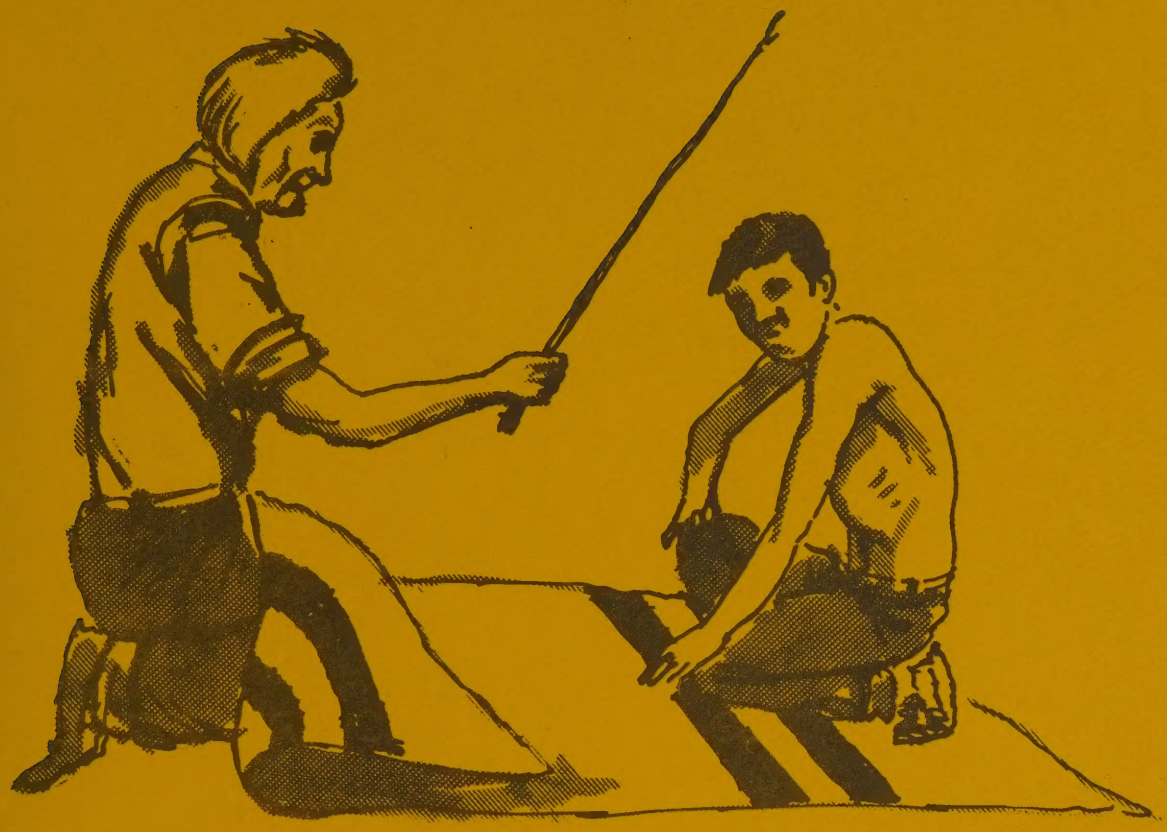
"Because I was bad!"

"Do you think I'm whipping you because I like to hurt young people?!"

I want to say "Yes, you mean, ugly man!", but it comes out. . ."No."

"What? I couldn't hear you!"

"No."

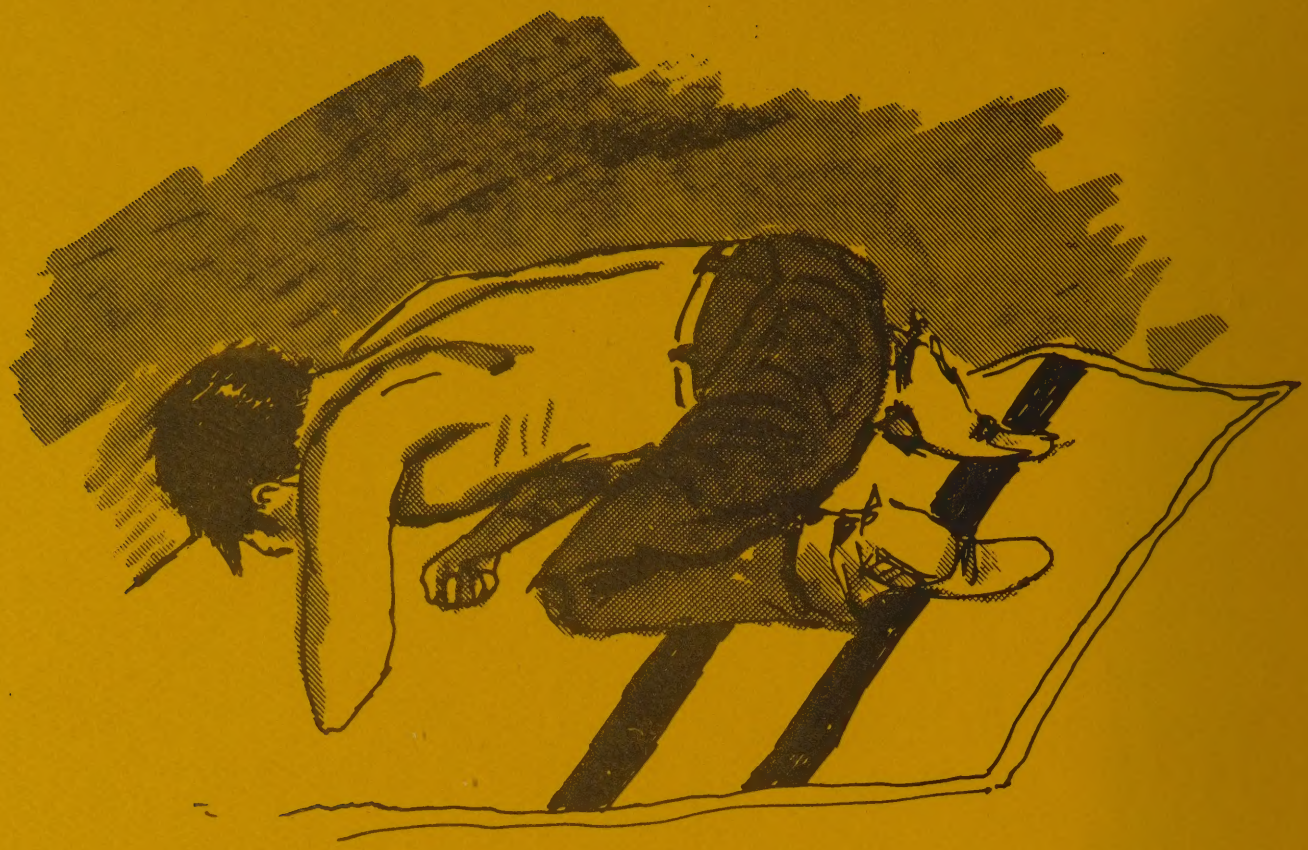


I'm whipping you because I want you to be a better person. You must learn to respect your elders. You must learn respect for your mother and father! There will come a time when you will look around and see young children being bad. . . maybe your own!"

"No! No!" I thought never, "I'll never get married!"

"You'll want respect then! But for now this is something you'll have to learn! Respect!"

I sat before him on my knees.



"I'm going to whip you five times! Don't move your elbows up, because I'll hit them! Once I start I won't stop. Don't cry, if you cry I'll whip you again. . .(Because this means you want to keep your meaness in you!)

"I'm not going to cry..." I thought, "I'm not going to cry." I fold my arms under my chest... lay my head forward.

"One!"

"I'm not going to cry..."

"Two!"

"Oh!"

"Three!"

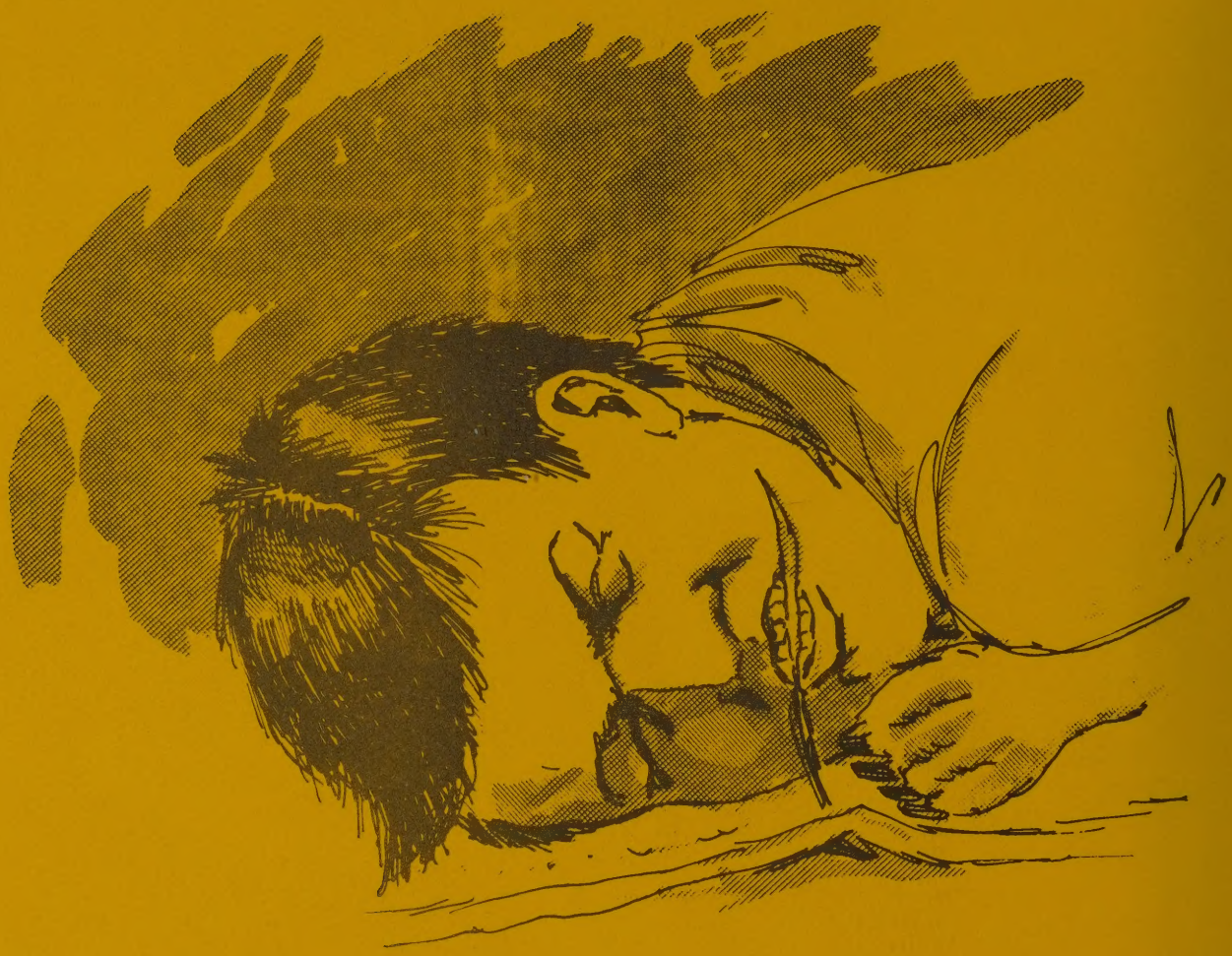
"Ohhh!"

"Four!"

"I'm not going to cry..."

"Five!"

"Ohhhh!" tears come.....but I don't cry.



"You have tears! Are you going to cry?"

"No!"

"Do you hate me for whipping you?"

"No."

"Then stand to the side, you'll dance for me when I'm through with the rest of them."

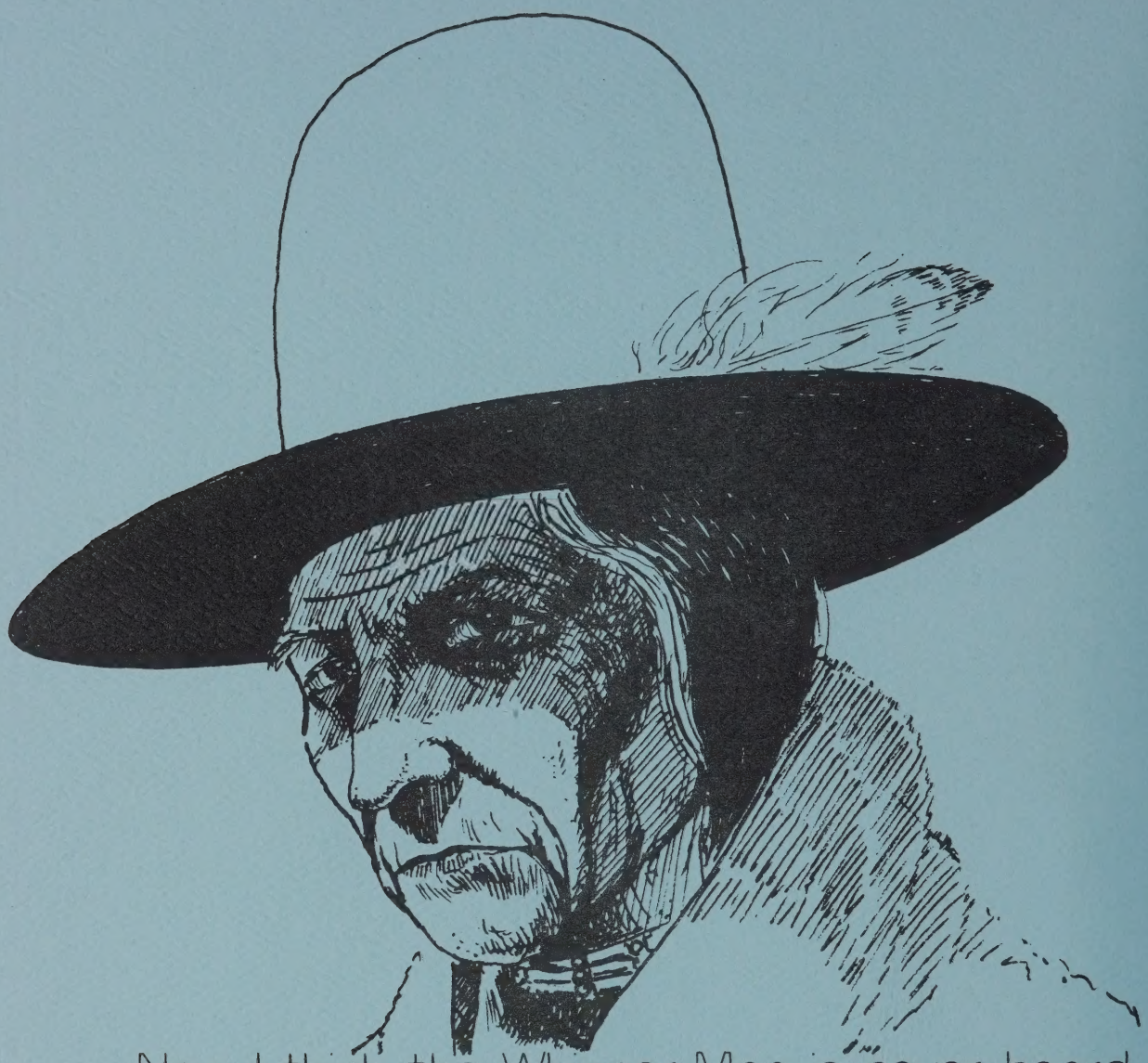
Then it was time for my sister. "Oh, my poor, little sister. . .it will hurt. . .I hope she won't cry."

When it was all over we all held our hands in the air and danced to his singing. Then we would all go out and play.

Five or ten minutes later maybe someone would get hurt. "Oh, don't cry cousin!" we would tell the person, "Don't cry; you know what will happen?"

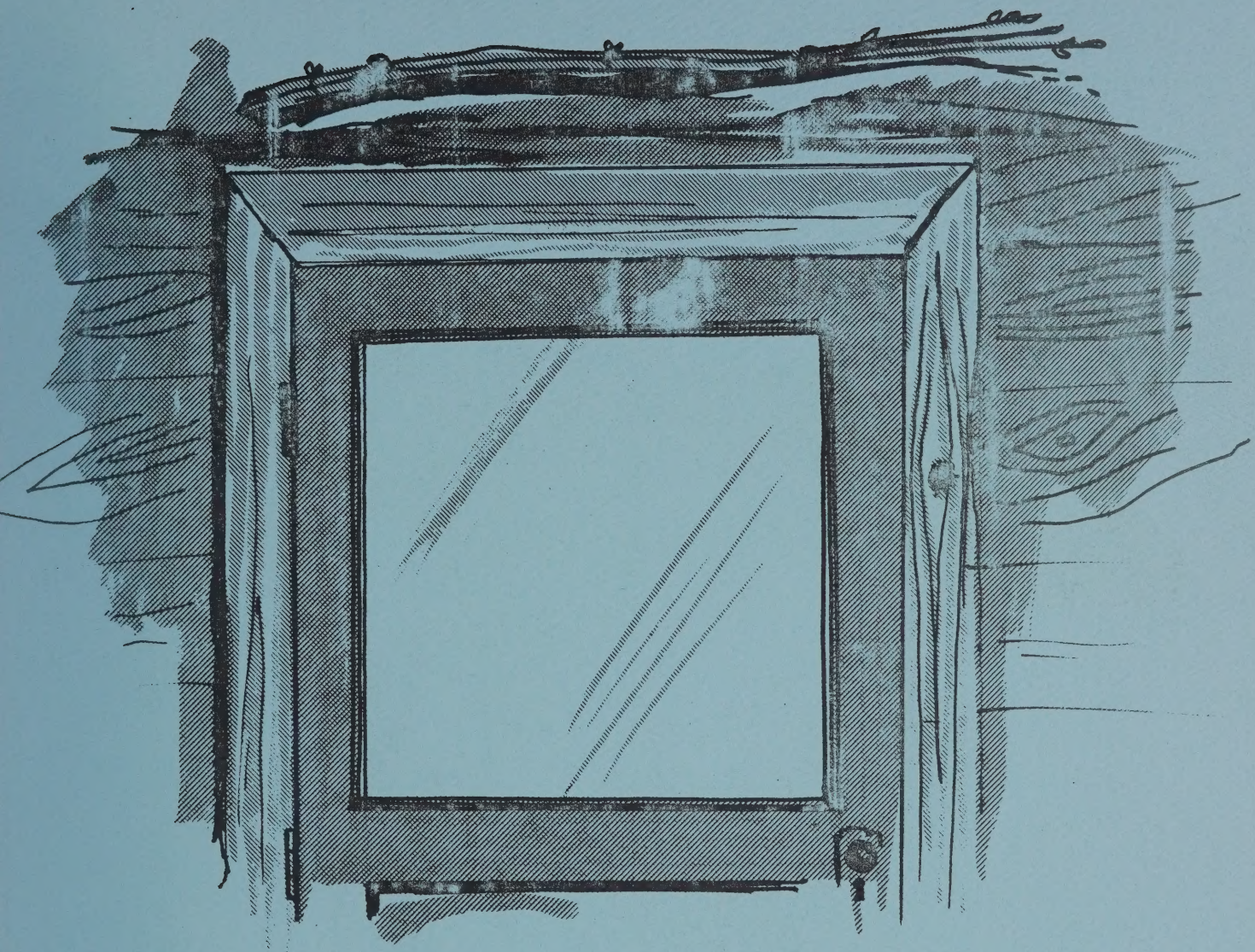
"What? Someone already crying?!" We would all line up again...this time for something that happened today....

"You know why I'm whipping you?" he would begin.



Now I think the Whipper Man is never heard of...a time of the Indian in days passed----long passed and all but forgotten except by people like myself.

The Whipper Man could be an uncle, or a friend of the family. He was paid in blankets and other things.



The whip he used always hung over the door or on the wall. "The Whip Man will be here someday!"

Never more.